

LISTING OF CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-18 (Cancelled)

19. (Previously Presented) A drive device for advancing an advancing element relative to a housing over a total advancing distance, comprising

a spring device for driving the advancing element in an advancing direction and
a tensioning element for tensioning the spring device, wherein

the spring device is tensioned between a counter-element and one of the advancing element and the tensioning element, and the advancing element is movable relative to the counter-element;

a first tension distance defined between the counter-element and the advancing element or between the counter-element and the tensioning element is set by translational movement of the tensioning element relative to the housing that tensions the spring device, the first tension distance corresponding to a first partial advancing distance of the advancing element;

the spring device is releasable to drive the advancing element the first partial advancing distance;

a second tension distance defined between the counter-element and the advancing element or between the counter-element and the tensioning element is set by an additional translational movement of the tensioning element relative to the housing that tensions the spring device, the second tension distance corresponding to a second partial advancing distance of the advancing element; and

each of the first partial advancing distance and the second partial advancing distance is shorter than the total advancing distance.

20. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed claim 19, wherein the spring device is formed by a helical spring which is tensioned between the counter-element and the advancing

element or the tensioning element.

21. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed claim 19 wherein the first and second tension distances are smaller or greater than the length of the untensioned spring device.

22. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed in claim 19, wherein the tensioning element for tensioning the spring device is movable relative to the housing and the advancing element in the direction of the counter-element.

23. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed in claim 19, the tensioning element can be moved in the direction of the counter-element or of the advancing element by a rotary device with at least one rotary element rotatable relative to the housing.

24. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed in claim 19, wherein the tensioning element has a thread, and the advancing element or the rotary element has a mating thread which interacts with the thread of the tensioning element.

25. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed in claim 19, further comprising a striker with an actuating element and a pusher element is provided, the pusher element being able to be pushed in the advancing direction by actuation of the actuating element.

26. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed claim 25, wherein the pusher element is formed by the advancing element.

27. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed in claim 26, wherein the actuating element protrudes from one end of the housing and has a continuation which protrudes from the opposite end of the housing.

28. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed claim 19, further comprising a locking device for releasably fixing the advancing element relative to the housing upon tensioning of the tensioning device.

29. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed in claim 23, wherein the rotary element is fixed relative to the housing parallel to the advancing direction and forms the counter-element, and, by rotation of the rotary element, the tensioning element is movable relative to the advancing element counter to the advancing direction.

30. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed claim 23, wherein the tensioning element is secured against rotation relative to the housing and forms the counter-element, and, by rotation of the rotary element, the tensioning element can be moved in the advancing direction relative to the advancing element.

31. (Withdrawn) A method for discharging a fluid product from a container through an outlet in the container, the method comprising the steps of:

arranging a plunger remote from the outlet inside the container, wherein a total advancing distance is defined by a maximum distance the plunger can travel within the container in the direction of the outlet;

arranging a drive device in a housing proximate the plunger, the drive device comprising:

a spring device,

a tensioning element for tensioning the spring device, and

an advancing element,

wherein the spring device is tensioned between a counter-element and one of the advancing element and the tensioning element, and the advancing element is movable relative to the counter-element;

advancing the plunger in the direction of the outlet under the force of the drive device, by a partial advancing distance which is shorter than the total advancing distance; and

after or during the advance of the advancing element over the partial advancing distance, tensioning the spring device by translational movement of the tensioning element relative to the housing.

32. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 31, wherein the plunger is advanced by the advancing element of the drive device.

33. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein upon tensioning of the spring device, a predetermined tensioning force in the spring device is generated by setting a predetermined distance between the counter-element and the advancing element and the tensioning element.

34. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 33, wherein a predetermined pressure in the container is generated, and the spring device is tensioned when the pressure drops by a certain amount.

35. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 34, wherein the drive device can be tensioned by the tensioning device during an advance of the advancing element.

36. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 35, wherein the plunger, at the start of the advance, is pushed in the advancing direction by a striker device.